

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20535

12 AUG 1987

Honorable Ernest F. Hollings  
Chairman, Committee on Commerce,  
Science and Transportation  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

This is to express the views of the Department of Defense on S. 828, 100th Congress, a bill "To provide authorization of appropriations for activities of the National Telecommunications and Information Administration."

The Department of Defense opposes the use of UHF frequencies assigned to the Department of the Navy and associated satellite assets to satisfy requirements of the Pan-Pacific Educational and Cultural Experiments by Satellite Program (PEACESAT), as provided for by Section 2.(c)(2)(A) of S. 828.

Although the UHF frequencies are assigned to the Department of the Navy, the frequencies and associated Pacific MARISAT satellite capacity are used by all Department of Defense agencies, as well as the President, the Department of State, and the Diplomatic Telecommunications System for critical national security communications. These same frequencies will be used on Navy follow-on UHF satellites when MARISAT ceases operating (expected to be 1992). As the primary band for tactical military operations, it is essential that this band be restricted to national security use. In addition, multinational agreements forming the basis for the standardization and interoperability of terminal equipment within our military services and among our allies preclude use of these frequencies for other than military purposes.

The Department of Defense agrees it is important to maintain our presence and our substantive relationships throughout the Pacific, in particular with former trust territories. We recommend that the Department of Commerce investigate the feasibility of using INMARSAT, a commercial communication satellite utilizing L-band (approximately 1.5 gigahertz) or other available commercial alternatives to provide a PEACESAT capability. Commercial suitcase-sized terminals for INMARSAT are available at reasonable cost, whereas all UHF satellite equipment is militarized and, therefore, more costly. While INMARSAT will have satellites available into the foreseeable future, the Pacific MARISAT envisioned for potential PEACESAT use in Senate Report 100-93 is expected to cease operating in 1992. INMARSAT offers an economical option for establishing a PEACESAT network: terminal equipment can be leased or purchased, and service charges are tailored to the requirement--one pays only for actual use. INMARSAT is also a

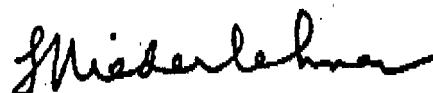
recognized and protected service, while the UHF MARISAT satellite system has no protection under the International Radio Regulations. If a UHF MARISAT channel is blocked due to interference, users have no regulatory recourse.

Both S. 828 and Senate Report 100-93 recognize that a UHF system is not a long-term solution for PEACESAT. The Department of Defense position is that the proposed MARISAT capability, using Department of the Navy frequencies, is not even a short-term solution for PEACESAT and opposes Section 2.(c)(2)(A) of S. 828 for the reasons stated above. The Department of Defense further suggests that the search for a solution to PEACESAT should concentrate on satellite systems such as INMARSAT, which are compatible with the INTELSAT accord, do not conflict with our established military agreements and use, and are more economical for the user.

Finally, I should note that the President's budget does not contain funding for PEACESAT. I understand that the Commerce Department will be communicating with you further in this regard.

The Office of Management and Budget advises that there is no objection to the presentation of this report for the consideration of the Committee.

Sincerely,



L. Niederlehner  
Deputy General Counsel